

Approved For Release 2001/03/04 : CIA-RDP80-01601R0003

CAPITOL STUFF

By TED LEWIS

Washington, Jan. 6 — The Pentagon Papers revealed that the Johnson administration was telling the American people one thing about the Vietnam war while doing another.

The Anderson papers—the secret government documents leaked to a syndicated columnist—show that the Nixon administration was actively pursuing a tough anti-India, pro-Pakistan policy last December while telling the people it was positively not anti-Indian.

Kissinger Loses His Value as A Backgrounder

Such sort of double talk at the federal level is not necessarily a crime. Foreign relations is always a delicate policy area where half-truths are often fed the people—even lies on occasion—in order to accomplish some end considered advisable and desirable.

But in the case of the Nixon administration, disclosure of a two-faced stance behind a surface neutrality posture vis-a-vis the quirky India-Pakistan War comes at a time when White House policy in the subcontinent area is a live issue. There is a fallout from the disclosures that affects our relations with many other nations, and also is most embarrassing to the administration in the already heated-up political scene here at home.

LBJ had a lucky break on the Pentagon Papers. They were publicized years after he had left the White House. Their revelations only tarnished the reputations of various presidential advisers long after they had left the Washington scene.

In connection with the Anderson papers, the reverse is true for President Nixon. He is now about to announce formally his second-term candidacy, and his political critics cannot only raise the credibility issue, but are given ammunition for a broad assault on his handling of foreign policy.

There is, for example, the disclosure that Nixon's ambassador to India, Kenneth Keating, was sharply critical of the administration's handling of the Bangladesh crisis. Then there was the disclosure that presidential adviser Henry Kissinger was interested in whether arms couldn't be sneaked to Pakistan from the arsenals we had supplied Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Not to be overlooked either is the clear implication in the Anderson papers that our vast intelligence sources, primarily in the CIA, were unable to produce solid information on whether India planned a limited or all-out war on Pakistan.

A whole boxful of other politically potent questions similarly arise from the Anderson disclosures. These include the fascinating conjecture that Nixon's "tilt"—siding with Pakistan against India—was part of a broad design, aimed at a United States-China rapprochement to counter Soviet influence in Asia.

But of more immediate interest here is what the disclosure will do to the image of Kissinger, who reflects, and speaks for, Nixon's foreign intentions far more than Secretary of State Rogers. The clarification supplied in a significant background briefing by Kissinger on Dec. 7 on how our policy was definitely "not anti-Indian" has now become suspect; for just a few days before, according to the Anderson papers, Kissinger was talking privately about the absolute necessity of "tilting" our policy to favor Pakistan.

Someone Else Will Have to Be Found

Kissinger's further usefulness as a presidential supplier of foreign policy background for the press has definitely become questionable. If there develops a conviction within the White House press corps that he cannot necessarily be believed, then someone else will have to be found to pass on the administration's line.

Kissinger is already in a most embarrassing spot. He has no one else to blame but himself for charging that what he said at the supposedly secret huddles of the National Security Council's Special Action Group had been taken out of context. The texts of the documents, as released by Anderson as a result of this challenge, refute this Kissinger claim beyond a shadow of a doubt.

There is a far broader political impact from the revelations of the inside secret scheming in behalf of Pakistan. It concerns the Nixon credibility issue, and why it figures much more than it ever did under LBJ. Most everybody knew that Johnson was a clever conceiver, manipulator of facts. It was no surprise to experienced Washington "watchers" when the Pentagon Papers showed the extent to which a distorted picture of the Vietnam War was supplied the America public.

He Promised an Open Administration

The fact is that Nixon himself, in his 1968 campaign, made much of this Johnson trait, and promised a new day if elected.

"It's time we once again had an open administration," Nixon said, "open to ideas from the people and open in its communication with the people—an administration of open doors, open eyes, and open minds."

Once in the White House, he was going to "level with the people," for "I have great confidence in what the American people are able to assimilate, and I think if you tell the American people the hard truth, they will make the hard decision."

Let the disclosures in the Anderson papers speak for themselves on how wide open this administration really is. There is a long record of how an administration exuding a high moral tone tends to come a cropper.

Back in 1952, Eisenhower talked about how a new broom that would sweep clean was required after the Truman administration scandals. Ike ended up with the Bernard Goldfine-Sherman Adams scandal, the proportions of which were dramatically emphasized because Ike had once promised to get the rascals out of government.

Kissinger has now become the fall guy in another collapse of good intentions—concerning supplying the people with the "hard truth."

STATINTL



Henry Kissinger



Jack Anderson